

Anti-Castro Cubans Say C.I.A. Imprisoned Them for 11 Weeks

Spokesman Asserts 17 Were Mistreated for Opposing Role for 'Batista Men'

By SAM POPE BREWER

Special to The New York Times.

MIAMI, May 5—An anti-Castro Cuban volunteer declared today that the Central Intelligence Agency had held him and sixteen others prisoner and incommunicado for eleven weeks before and during last month's abortive invasion of Cuba.

He said he was in fear of death much of the time.

The statements were made by Dr. Rodolfo Nodal Tarafa, 27-year-old lawyer, one of seventeen held in a remote camp in the jungle of Petén in northern Guatemala until last Friday. The fact of their imprisonment was well-known in Miami and was reported earlier.

Originally their number was given incorrectly as eighteen. The full details have not been available until now.

Dr. Nodal and his fellow prisoners have just organized a new Cuban movement to be known



The New York Times May 7, 1961
Guatemala's Petén region (cross) was said to be the site of a detention camp.

as the 7th of April movement in memory of the invasion they missed. They have called for the cooperation of all Cuban groups to overthrow Premier Fidel Castro but under Cuban leadership and without the participation of the C. I. A.

Dr. Nodal and his companions maintain that because they opposed Capt. Manuel Artime and other leaders backed by the

Continued on Page 4, Column 2

C. I. A., they were threatened, handcuffed, kept in "subhuman" prison conditions, accused of being Communists and submitted to lie detector tests at gun point.

According to Dr. Nodal, members of the group were neither charged with any offense, nor brought to trial during their eleven weeks of imprisonment. He said that until they landed outside Miami last Friday they had not been able to find out where they were being taken.

They charge that the intelligence agency employed "thugs" and "gangsters" who stood between the Cuban volunteers and their own Cuban leaders. Dr. Nodal said that throughout their imprisonment, except for a few days, they were under "American" guards.

Pressed for details, he said that by "American" he meant that they were the C. I. A. representatives in charge of the camp who were assumed to be American and whose authority was unchallenged. He said that some spoke English with an accent and were believed by the Cubans to be naturalized United States citizens, "perhaps of Central European origin." They were known to the Cubans only by code names.

Most Refuse to Talk

Most of the former prisoners will not discuss their experiences for fear of some form of reprisal.

Dr. Nodal emphasized that the group's resentment was directed not against the United States but against the "incredible men" who ran the camp. This, in chronological detail, is his story:

Dr. Nodal came to Miami from Cuba to work for the Democratic Revolutionary Front last October. On Dec. 6 he enlisted in Miami and was sent to Guatemala for training.

On Jan. 31 about 300 men in the training camp at Trax, Guatemala, were mustered by their senior military adviser known to them only as Frank. They were told that two Cuban officers who had been in charge had been sent away "for playing politics."

This left Capt. José Perez San Román in charge of the camp as far as Cubans had any control. Captain San Román was one of the leaders of the April 17 invasion and has since been captured by the Cuban Government.

Exile sources here agree that Captain San Román was an officer in Cuba under Fulgencio Batista, whose dictatorial regime was overthrown by Fidel Castro. He is said to have fought against the Castro revolution in the Sierra Maestra, although there is no way to confirm this.

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230 Seek to Resign

Of the 300 men, 230 asked to resign from the force at Camp Trax because of the change in leaders. A new North American agent known to them as Bernie then appeared on the scene. He accused the troops of insubordination, as a result of Communist influence.

Bernie said he had authority from the Democratic Revolutionary Front to name commanders and that he had chosen Captain San Román.

The 230 dissenters demanded that their case be heard by a member of the Front within seventy-two hours. Otherwise they wished to be discharged and returned home.

They elected a committee of five to call on Bernie with their demand. He refused to see more than a single spokesman and Dr. Nodal was chosen by the others.

Dr. Nodal said he explained in detail that they were neither mercenaries nor conscripts but volunteers and that they could not accept leaders who they considered represented the opposite of what they were fighting for.

After discussion it was agreed that the men would continue training for five days while they waited to hear when they might expect a representative of the Democratic Front.

Troops Strike Again

When seven days had gone by without an answer the troops went on strike again.

Frank arrived back from a trip to Washington on that day but would say only that he hoped a representative of the Democratic Revolutionary Front would arrive "within a month."

The next day they were formally ordered back to training. Under the pressure of threats and promises all but twenty gave in during the next few days. The others agreed to resume training with the promise that their demands would be met.

On Feb. 11 the men were ordered out on a field exercise. While the camp was virtually empty one of the advisers called for eight of the twenty remaining standouts and asked them to go with him. They thought there was to be a further conference.

They were led along a jungle path to a big canvas-covered truck and suddenly found themselves covered by Thompson submachine guns held by three men. They were ordered into the truck and driven away.

At La Suiza, an estate where there was a Guatemalan Army camp, they were surrounded by eight or ten men with automatic weapons. The prisoners were taken from the truck one at a time and led away out of sight. They felt they were about to be shot.

Each was taken into a small room, forced to empty all his pockets and remove all his clothes.

"I felt this was it," Dr. Nodal said. "I was sure we were going to be murdered."

When they had given up all their possessions — "even our love letters" — they were told to dress again and taken away to a shed in the camp. As they assembled they found five other

men from their unit who had had no connection with the mutiny but who had quarreled with Captain San Román. Two days later another prisoner was brought in, making their total number fourteen.

The shed they were in was about 15 by 30 feet with a concrete floor, wooden walls and a galvanized iron roof. In the sunny Guatemalan highlands it was so hot in the daytime that they lay naked and panting on the floor. But it was bitter cold at night.

Dr. Nodal said they were given black beans, rice and tortillas without salt to eat.

5 Prisoners Questioned

On Feb. 24 five prisoners were taken away without any explanation. Outside each was put into a pick-up truck and driven away to the Helvetia camp not far away.

There they were questioned separately by Pat, the chief security guard. Dr. Nodal described him as "6 feet, 4 inches tall and about 230 pounds and stupid." His questioning, however, was said to be courteous. At La Suiza Dr. Nodal said.

Dr. Nodal was then taken into another shed and turned over to a young man operating a lie-detector.

Dr. Nodal said the interrogation was aimed at making him say he was a Communist.

The prisoners then were allowed to bathe and shave for the first time in twelve days and were given clean clothes and an edible meal. They were taken back to the shack at La Suiza.

Five days later, March 1, an agent known as Pappy, who was said to be the chief of the whole operation in Guatemala, came to say that they were being moved again but he would not say where.

Four were taken away in handcuffs at that time. The next day the remaining ten, including Dr. Nodal, were taken



The New York Times

VISITED REBELS: Dr. José Miro Cardona, head of Cuban revolutionary council. He was said to have visited men separated from forces and kept prisoner, and to have offered aid. The men have been released.

to the air base at Retalhuleu, and flown to a river in the Petén jungle area.

They were taken up the river for an hour in canoes. There, in a crude camp at the top of a cliff they found their four previous companions and two other men they had not seen since leaving the Trax camp.

They were warned, Dr. Nodal said, that they would be shot if they tried to escape. They found living conditions better than in their last prison. Yet still no one would answer any questions. Their guards brought in a

radio set for an hour a day so they could hear the news programs from Radio Swan, a station operated from Swan Island, off the Honduran Coast.

A seventeenth prisoner was brought in to join them when they had been there two days.

On March 28 they heard that Dr. José Miró Cardona was to be named president of the Revolutionary Council. Two days later he arrived to visit them. Dr. Nodal said, with Dr. Manuel A. de Varona, the Council's Secretary of War.

Dr. Miró Cardona said he had no part in their misfortune and that he would see they were set free within a few days. He carried away the first letters they had been able to send out to their families since their arrest.

They awoke April 17 to find that their guard had disappeared. They were still guarded, however, by a detachment of forty-seven Guatemalan soldiers under a lieutenant. "At all other times," Dr. Nodal said, "we were guarded by Americans with automatic weapons."

Invasion News Broadcast

Later that day they learned by radio of the Cuban invasion. They were discussing their chances for an escape when the Guatemalan lieutenant, who had a direct radio link with Retalhuleu, told them that an American was coming from Retalhuleu to get them.

Two days later five heavily armed men arrived, headed by a short, bald, middle-aged man known to them as Mac.

Dr. Nodal said Mac berated them at length for not being with the invasion forces. He said they had missed their chance to do their patriotic duty and that when the invaders won out the prisoners would be handed over to Captain San Román "in handcuffs."

Mac then left the camp but four guards stayed with them.

On Friday, April 28, eleven

days after the invasion began, their guards suddenly took them by canoe to a village on the mainland and, after an hour's ride in a jeep, they were put into a DC-3 airplane at a jungle airstrip.

They were flown back to Retalhuleu, carefully searched and loaded into a C-54 aircraft, where they found 118 other volunteers who for one reason or another had not taken part in the landing.

Even then, they said, when they asked the security officer, whom they knew as Don, where they were going, the only answer was that they would learn when they got there.

They arrived at a Florida airport before dawn Saturday. Dr. Nodal said he found himself in the same hangar from which he had started out for Guatemala. He did not know where it was except that it was about an hour's ride south of Miami.

That odyssey ended when they were dumped from trucks before daybreak in Miami itself. They found themselves free men again after eleven weeks.

Nodal Heads New Group

Dr. Nodal is president of the new 17th of April group. He was politically active in Cuba in the AAA movement, a code name for the National Revolutionary Front headed by Dr. Aureliano Sánchez Arango during the Batista regime.

The secretary general of the new group is Dr. Omar Castañeda, a lawyer who was a leader in the university students anti-Castro organization.

Their fellow prisoners included: Francisco and René Chávez, newspaper men on the staff of the *Diario de la Marina*; Adalberto Delgado, medical student; Rodolfo Bartelemy, Dominicus, captain in the Castro police; An-

tonio Frontela, Gomez, electrical worker; Cecilio Fuentes Rico, bartender; Rolando Fuentes Rico, truck driver; Epifanio González Arrasti, laborer and a member of the Castro Commandos of the National Institute of Agrarian Reform; Humberto Olivera Perez, former captain in the regular army; Luis Alberto Olivera, student; Ricardo Martínez de la Cruz, customs chief of José Martí Airport, Havana, under the Castro regime; Julio Antonio More, law student; Marlin Torres, art student, and two others who concealed their

names because they have families in Cuba.

Officials Decline Comment

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, May 6—Official circles withheld comment today on the report by Dr. Rodolfo Nodal Tarafa on the imprisonment of anti-Castro Cubans in a camp in Guatemala.

CIA Accused of Imprisoning 17 Cubans for 11 Weeks

The Central Intelligence Agency has been charged with imprisoning an anti-Castro Cuban leader and 16 companions for 11 weeks both before and after the Cuban "invasion" fiasco.

The New York Times, in a story from Miami, identified the Cuban as Rodolfo Nodal Taraga, 27, a lawyer who was active in the National Revolutionary Front during the Batista regime.

Nodal said he and the other 16 Cubans were held incommunicado in a remote camp in the jungle of Peten in northern Guatemala until April 28—11 days after the Cuban landings began. They were flown back to

Miami and released on the following day, he reported.

He attributed the imprisonment to their opposition to Capt. Manuel Artime and other leaders backed by the CIA for the abortive Cuban landings.

The 17 were kept in "subhuman" prison conditions, Nodal declared, accused of being Communists, and subjected to lie detector tests at gunpoint.

The Times said the fact of their imprisonment was well known among Cuban circles in Miami, but full details had not been disclosed previously.

Nodal went to Miami from Cuba last October to work for the democratic revolutionary front and later was sent to Guatemala for training. These are other details of his story:

After he and others in the camp objected to the Cuban leaders in charge, they were put under guard and shuttled from one camp to another. They were questioned constantly.

Some of the prisoners were taken away and others added as they went along. On March 30, Jose Miro Cardona, later named president of the Cuban Revolutionary Council, visited them and promised to have them set free.

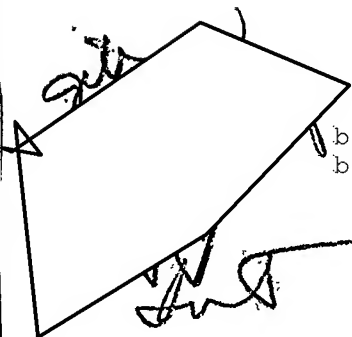
When he left, he took with him the first letters they had been able to send their families since their arrest. He also told them he had nothing to do with their arrest.

Finally, a month later, they were flown to Miami in relays and released.

Nodal and his fellow prisoners have organized a new Cuban organization to be known as the 17th of April movement in memory of the Cuban landings.

They have called on Cuban groups to work together for the overthrow of Castro but without the participation of the CIA.

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Cuban Rebel Survivors Reported U. S. Captives

Believed Held on Vieques Island Behind Tight Screen of Secrecy

By BEM PRICE
Associated Press Staff Writer

There is reason to believe that the United States is holding survivors of the Cuban invasion forces incommunicado—prisoners, if you will—on a Caribbean island.

And there is evidence that the United States troubles with communism in Central and South America are just beginning.

The first rumor about the United States-held survivors of the invasion, some of whom reportedly are wounded, reached the United States naval base at Guantanamo Bay soon after the military effort collapsed.

The grapevine there is so efficient that reports of activities in Havana, 600 miles west, sometimes reach the base before they are broadcast by the Castro regime.

Within hours after the grapevine report reached the base, the Castro captives from the abortive invasion—who were being interrogated in Havana on television—began talking of a particular island, Vieques.

Trained at U. S. Base

They said they had been trained for the invasion at the United States Marine base at Vieques, which is just a 30-minute helicopter ride from San Juan, Puerto Rico.

While the rumor about the Vieques prisoners was seeping into Guantanamo, it was also circulating in San Juan and New York.

A Navy officer talked by radio to the naval station at San Juan, asking if newsmen wanting to check on the rumors could be admitted to Vieques.

The answer was that no one

would be admitted to the base without special permission from Washington.

On the assumption that training bases are normally open to visitors, efforts were made to gain access to Vieques through the Central Intelligence Agency and the White House.

The CIA was noncommittal. A White House spokesman said it would not assist in the matter of entry.

Doctor Held Captive

Presumably the United States wants no one to talk to these survivors until the furor over the Cuban debacle—and the CIA's role in it—has died down.

While the Vieques operation was kept secret, the New York Times has reported the story of Dr. Rodolfo Nodal Tarafa, 27-year-old lawyer and member of the anti-Castro invasion forces.

Dr. Nodal said he and 16 other volunteers had been held captive at gunpoint in Guatemala by CIA agents because they refused to serve in the invasion forces under a man they described as a murderer in the regime of Dictator Fulgencio Batista.

One consequence of the inva-

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sion, flop apparently has been a great upsurge in Communist activities in Central and South America.

Early this month a chartered Cuban airliner landed at Kingston, Jamaica to refuel. Out stepped 35 Communists, including two women, who said they had departed from Recife, Brazil, for Havana.

They made no bones about the fact that they were going to Havana to learn how Fidel Castro carried Cuba into the Soviet orbit.

There are reports that Cuban airliners are flying around the Caribbean picking up Communists and depositing them in Havana.

At a post-Cuban invasion background briefing, a high Pentagon official said the United States could expect more revolutions and more Castros south of the border.

Dubious on MIGs

Other reflections in the invasion aftermath:

Did the Castro forces have Russian-built MIG fighters aloft during the fighting? Assorted communiques from the anti-Castro groups made that assertion. But the best radar the Navy owns, including shipboard and airborne, has yet to detect the presence of high performance jet aircraft in Cuba. The Cubans do have American-built jet trainers, but they are incapable of supersonic flight.

During the invasion and for some time thereafter, the United States Navy had Navy ships and aircraft in the Cuban area.

Their presence was described by the Navy as routine. They had nothing to do with the Cuban danger, the Navy said.

Though a plane from the super carrier Independence had landed at Guantanamo to pick up film for shipboard movies, the Navy consistently denied the Independence was anywhere about. They did, that is, until the seagoing airfield rammed an ammunition ship,

the USS Diamond Head. The Diamond Head brought her sad story to Guantanamo.

Pipeline to Castro

There are roughly 3,200 Cubans working on the base and some of them make a pretty good pipeline to Castro.

Further, any time the Iron Curtain countries want a good look at whatever portion of the United States Fleet happens to be in Guantanamo, all they have to do is send a ship in.

The naval base is built around the outer bay of Guantanamo. There is a Cuban-controlled inner bay and access to this bay by ships of any nation is guaranteed by treaty.

In the last month or two, a couple of Iron Curtain cargo ships have sailed right down the middle of the Guantanamo harbor.

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Cuba Revolt Survivor Report to Be Probed

By the Associated Press

Senator Morse, Democrat of Oregon, said today his Senate Latin Affairs Subcommittee will look into reports that the United States is holding some survivors of the Cuban invasion force incommunicado on the Caribbean Island of Vieques; a United States Marine base.

The subcommittee, of which Senator Morse is chairman, has been hearing secret reports on the invasion flop.

Reports that invasion survivors, some reportedly wounded, were being held on the Marine base cropped out at the United States naval base at Guantanamo, Cuba; at New York City, and at San Juan, Puerto Rico.

News men have been denied permission to visit Vieques, presumably because United States officials want the furor over the Cuban debacle to die down.

"This is all news to me," Senator Morse said in an interview as he read the report. "I will see what the subcommittee can find out about it."

Senator Morse said the Cuban invasion was "handled to a great extent by the White House staff, rather than regular State Department channels."

It was learned from reliable sources that Senator Fulbright, Democrat of Arkansas, only member of Congress to learn in advance of the invasion plans, overheard them by chance while a guest of President Kennedy en route by airplane to Florida on March 30.

The same sources said that White House staffers masterminding the invasion included Arthur N. Schlesinger, Jr., special assistant to the President, and Adolph A. Berle and Prof. Lincoln Gordon of the special Cubans are being held prisoner Cuban task force.

Asked about the report that on Vieques, Assistant White House Press Secretary Andrew Hatcher declined comment yesterday. The State Department referred questions to the Defense Department.

department declined also comment.

A United States official, who would not permit use of his name, said there are no Cubans on Vieques. However, he confirmed in part a report, first printed in the New York Times, that 17 Cubans had been held incommunicado in Guatemala while the invasion was under way.

The Times quoted a spokesman for the 17 Cubans, all released later, as saying the men were held captive by the Central Intelligence Agency because they refused to serve

in the invasion forces under a man they described as a murderer in the regime of Dictator Fulgencio Batista.

The United States official, however, described as correct a different version which described the 17 Cubans as mutineers and misfits and said they would have been turned over to the new Cuban government for trial if the invaders had overthrown Prime Minister Fidel Castro.

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4 Fliers Missing On Cuban Mission

BY JERRY NORRIS AND SANDRA PIRTLE

Four Birmingham civilian airmen, flying a cargo plane for anti-Castro forces in the April 19 Cuban invasion, are missing and presumed dead.

A Miami attorney representing the firm that hired the fliers for the anti-Castro Cubans, said the four men broke radio silence during the invasion and reported that one of their two engines had gone out, and that they were losing altitude. Nothing more was heard from the plane.

Alex E. Carson, attorney for Double Check Corp., said the four men were Riley W. Shamburger, 36, 916 75th-st. s, pilot; Thomas Willard Ray, 33, of 1435 Sloan-av, co-pilot; Lee F. Baker, 35, 4406 15th-av n, engineer, and Wade

Guardsman Claims Others Approached

A Birmingham Air National Guardsman said last night that he knew of at least two other Guard members who had been approached here with offers of \$3000 for three months' to fly anti-Castro forces.

The man asked that his name be withheld.

Carroll Gray of Pinson, radio operator.

Carlson said he did not know whether the two-engine C-46, carrying an undisclosed cargo, had been shot down.

Plane Remnants Found

Remnants of the plane's wreckage have turned up in the Caribbean but no bodies have been found, he said.

Carlson made his statements in See 4 FLIERS, Page 2



PRESUMED DEAD—Lee F. Baker.



PILOT — R. W. Shamburger.

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4 Fliers Missing

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a news conference here yesterday after consulting the families of all four men. "I don't think their families knew where they were going, or what they were going to do," he said.

The fatal flight apparently started "somewhere in Central America," he said. The exact destination was unknown.

The Cuban exiles employed Double Check Corp. to locate a four-man crew for hazardous flying aboard a C-46, Carlson stated. He said the contacts with the Birmingham men were made in early April.

"These men knew what they were getting into," he said. "It was a calculated risk. If they came back they had a nice nest egg."

"Their families will receive substantial benefits as part of the contract," he added.

Described As Valiant

He described the four men as valiant and dedicated, "fighting for something this country believes in."

He said as far as he knows, the four men are the only fliers that Double Check put in touch with the Cubans.

The pilot, Riley W. Shamburger, is a combat pilot of World War II and Korea and has been a test pilot for the Hayes Corp. for several years. He was a major in the Air National Guard, an RF84 jet pilot assigned to the 106th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, as operations officer.

His wife, Marion Jane Shamburger, said he had 12,000 hours of flying time to his credit. She told reporters at her home that April 19—the day the plane went down—was their 15th wedding anniversary.

"I've just told my daughter what happened," she said. "I've known about it for some time, but I told no one—other people's lives could have been endangered."

Shamburger had been a pilot for 18 years.

Attended Woodlawn

Mrs. Shamburger said she and her husband had gone to school together at Barrett and Woodlawn High School. They have a 13-year-old daughter.

Brig. General G. Reid Doster,

Air National Guard commander here, said so far as he could determine, "Shamburger was the only Guardsman among the four men involved."

General Doster said he was "much distressed at losing a very fine officer." He had known nothing of Shamburger's departure, he said, because the flyer had not been away long enough to have missed any number of meetings.

"They knew what they were getting into, but I didn't," said Mrs. Catherine Baker, 4408 13th av. n, wife of the engineer on the ill-fated trip.

Mrs. Baker, who is expecting her second baby in September, was hospitalized last week after learning from Carlson that her husband was missing.

She said that Baker first left home about the second week in February, returning to Birmingham two or three times a month. He never revealed where he had been, and she assumed that he was on ordinary flying expeditions.

"The last time Leo came home was about two weeks before Easter (April 2)," she said, "but he sent me flowers for Easter Sunday."

Received Letter

She received a letter from him April 21, dated April 13, but she said he mentioned nothing about what he was doing.

"He often talked about Shamburger, but I never met him," said Mrs. Baker. "I didn't know Gray and Ray at all."

Baker was owner of two restaurants here—Leo's Pizza shack number one in East Lake and Pizza shack number two in Homewood.

The Bakers have two children—Theresa Anne, 11, Baker's daughter by a previous marriage, and Catherine Elizabeth, who had her first birthday last month.

In addition to his restaurant operation, Baker had been employed as a flight engineer at Hayes since Feb. 12, 1957. He was a native of Boston, Mass., and graduated from high school there.

Air Force Veteran

An executive at Hayes said that his record showed that he was an Air Force veteran, having entered the service in 1944 and receiving a discharge as a technical sergeant.

Mrs. Baker, the former Catherine Walker, has lived in Birmingham most of her life and is a graduate of Woodlawn High School.

Gray, like Shamburger, formerly was a test pilot with Hayes

Corp. He was 38, married to Violet Lean Gray and had no children.

He had lived in Pinson all his life, attended Pinson School and Tarrant High School, where he graduated in 1947.

A member of the family said "He's been gone about three months. He didn't tell anybody where he was going, or why. We don't know much about this."

Thomas Willard Ray, the copilot, 1435 Sloan, also was an employee of Hayes, working as a classified planning and technical inspector. He joined the company in December, 1952. The Hayes spokesman said he resigned March 18 this year.

Born in Tarrant, on March 14, 1931, he was a 1950 graduate of Tarrant High School. He served in the Air Force from 1950 until 1952, receiving a discharge as a staff sergeant.

Ray was married to the former Margaret Hayden and has two children—Thomas Morgan Ray, 9, and Janet Joy Ray, 6. His mother, Mrs. Mary Lou Ray, and a brother, Joe Dillard Ray, are other survivors.

Although the family refused to talk with newsmen, their attorney announced that memorial services for Ray will be at 3 p.m. Sunday, May 14, at Rock Methodist Church, Tarrant City.



BAKER FAMILY—Mrs. Leo F. Baker, with one-year-old Catherine Elizabeth at their home, first heard last week that her husband was among four Birmingham crew members of a C-46 cargo plane which crashed in the Caribbean during the Cuban invasion.

Four local airmen lost on flight for anti-Castro exiles

BY DAVE LANGFORD, News staff writer

Four Birmingham airmen, in the employ of anti-Castro forces, were lost somewhere in the Caribbean when an engine failed on their C46 airplane.

A spokesman for a firm of Miami confidential agents said today the four were reported missing and presumed dead after they left on a cargo mission from an undisclosed airstrip to Central America.

He identified them as:

Riley W. Shanburger of 916 75th st. s. pilot; Thomas Willard Ray of 1435 Sloan av. co-pilot; Lee F. Baker of 4408 15th av. n. engineer, and Wade Carroll Gray of Pinson, radio operator.

ALEX E. CARLSON, an attorney of Miami Springs, Fla., said at a news conference he was speaking for the Double Check Corp. of Miami, which put the anti-Castro Cubans in touch with the four Birmingham airmen in early April.

He said the C46 was maintaining radio silence when it left the secret airstrip about April 19.

"They were told to use the radio only in case of an emergency," he said. "Then they reported one engine had gone out, and they were losing altitude. That was the last they have been heard from."

The date of their departure coincides with the abortive attempt at an invasion of Cuba by anti-Castro forces.

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CARLSON SAID he was in Birmingham to notify the families of the four that their husbands were presumed dead.

He said Double Check Corp. contacted the four in behalf of an organization which requested that its identity remain confidential.

"But it is presumed to be an exiled group of Cubans," he said.

He said Double Check, acting as only an agent, hired the four at a monthly salary for multi-engine aircraft flying cargo.

He said he did not know the nature of their cargo nor their destination.

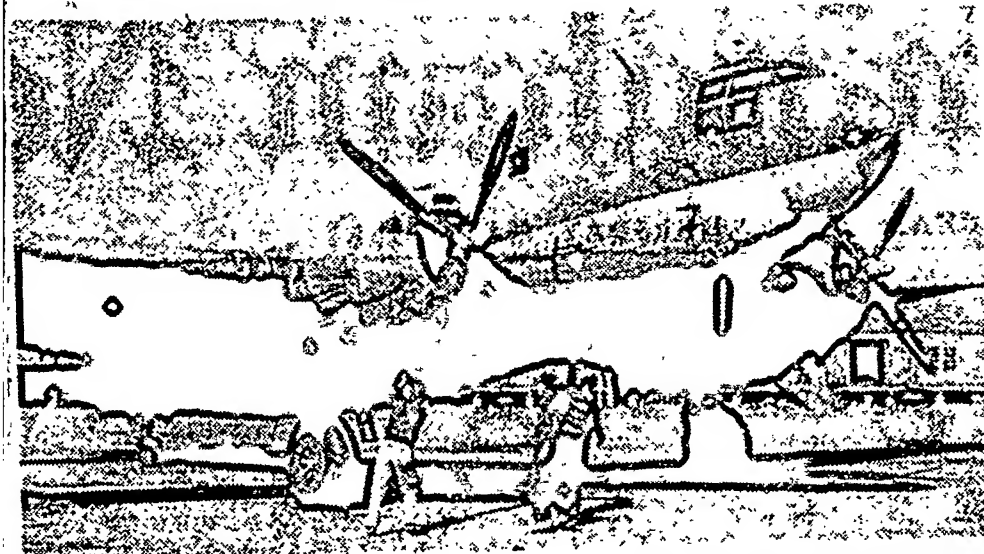
"THESE MEN knew what they were getting into," he said. "It was a calculated risk. If they came back they had a nice nest-egg."

The "user" informed me a week ago that the men were missing. In the interim period the wives were notified, but their ultimate whereabouts are not yet known.

He said a search of the area where the airplane is believed to have gone down revealed only parts of the airplane.

He said the men were guaranteed.

Turn to Page 2, Column 3



WORLD WAR II ERA CURTIS C-46 "COMMANDO" TWIN ENGINE TRANSPORT
... Plane in picture is similar to craft local men were flying

Fliers

Continued from Page 1

teed "substantial benefits" to their wives and families, each having a separate arrangement.

SHAMBURGER was a major in the Alabama Air National Guard, an RF-84 jet pilot assigned to the 117th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing.

Baker was owner and operator of Leo's Pizza Shop in East Lake. Wives of the airmen were identified as Mrs. Violet Lean Gray, Margaret Rebecca Ray, Marlon Jane Shamburger and Catherine Baker.

Carlson said Double Check could be described as a "broker."

"We only put our client in touch with the pilots," he said.

He said these four were the only airmen Double Check has contracted.

BAKER WOULD have been 35 April 24. In addition to the Pizza Shop, he operated another restaurant in Birmingham.

His wife, Catherine, said she knew nothing of her husband's whereabouts, or what he was doing, until notified about a week ago that he was missing.

The Bakers have two children

—Theresa Anne, 11, Baker's daughter by a previous marriage, and Catherine Elizabeth, who had her first birthday last month.

"I didn't know what he was doing, and I don't know how much money he was supposed to get," she said. "All I know is that Leo always made a good living for us."

Baker was a flight engineer in World War II, she said.

RELATIVES of Ray, age 30, said any information about his activities would have to come from Atty. Frank Dixon of Birmingham, who is working in conjunction with the Double Check attorney.

Gray, married with no chil-

dren, was 33.

He formerly was a test pilot for Hayes Corp. here, but was laid off about a year ago, said his brother, George Gray.

"He's been gone about three months," the brother said. "He didn't tell anybody where he was going or why."

Shamburger, 36, had been employed as a test pilot at Hayes Aircraft Corp. since 1953. He has one daughter, Marlon Jane, 13.

Central Research Section

U. S. Believed Holding Survivors of Invasion

By Ben Price
Associated Press

There is reason to believe that the United States is holding survivors of the Cuban invasion forces incommunicado—prisoners, if you will—on a Caribbean island.

And there is evidence that the U. S. troubles with com-

munist in Central and South America are just beginning.

The first rumor about the U. S.-held survivors of the invasion, some of whom reportedly are wounded, reached the U. S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay soon after the military effort collapsed.

The grapevine there is so

efficient that reports of activities in Havana, 600 miles west, sometimes reach the base before they are broadcast by the regime of Premier Fidel Castro.

Within hours after the grapevine report of U. S.-held survivors reached the base, the Castro captives from the abortive invasion—who were being interrogated in Havana on television—began talking of a particular island, Vieques.

U. S. Base Mentioned

They said they had been trained for the invasion at the U. S. Marine base at Vieques, which is just a 30-minute helicopter ride from San Juan, Puerto Rico.

While the rumor about the Vieques prisoners was seeping into Guantánamo, it was also circulating in San Juan and New York.

A Navy officer talked by radio to the naval station at San Juan, asking if newsmen wanting to check on the rumors could be admitted to Vieques.

The answer was that no one would be admitted to the base without special permission from Washington.

On the assumption that training bases are normally open to visitors, efforts were made to gain access to Vieques through the Central Intelligence Agency and the White House.

The CIA was noncommittal. A White House spokesman said it would not assist in the matter of entry.

Presumably the United States wants no one to talk to these survivors until the furor over the Cuban debacle—and the CIA's role in it—has died down.

While the Vieques operation was kept secret, the New York Times has reported the story of Rodolfo Nodal Tarafa, 27-year-old lawyer and member of the anti-Castro invasion forces.

Tolson _____
Parsons _____
Mohr _____
Belmont _____
Callahan _____
Conrad _____
DeLoach _____
Evans _____
Malone _____
Rosen _____
Tavel _____
Trotter _____
W.C. Sullivan _____
Tele Room _____
Ingram _____
Gandy _____

DeLoach

16 Held Captive

Nodal said he and 16 other volunteers had been held captive at gunpoint in Guantánamo by CIA agents because they refused to serve in the invasion forces under a man they described as a murderer in the regime of ousted President Fulgencio Batista.

The Washington Post reported these men were arrested as mutineers.

The Washington Post and *All*
Times Herald
The Washington Daily News _____
The Evening Star _____
New York Herald Tribune _____
New York Journal-American _____
New York Mirror _____
New York Daily News _____
New York Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Worker _____
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